

FY2011 Idaho Adult Basic Education

NRS ON-SITE MONITORING GUIDANCE

Overview of the NRS

The National Reporting System (NRS) is the accountability system for the federally funded, State-administered adult education program. It addresses the accountability requirements of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Title II of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA—P.L.105–220).

The goals of the NRS project were to develop a national accountability system for adult education programs by identifying measures for national reporting and their definitions, establishing methodologies for data collection, developing standards for reporting to the U.S. Department of Education, and developing training materials and activities on NRS requirements and procedures. The development of the NRS proceeded in three phases.

To help ensure comparability of measures across States, the NRS has established procedures for collecting all of the NRS measures. Idaho collects measures through direct program reporting and data matching. With the *direct program reporting* methodology, local programs collect the information directly from the learner while the learner is enrolled and receiving instruction. The information is normally obtained as part of the intake process (through student assessment) or ongoing throughout the course of instruction. Measures collected with this methodology are the demographic, student status, and student participation measures, as well as the educational gain measure and the secondary measures of project learner completion and citizenship skill attainment.

State Responsibility

To measure educational gain within the NRS, States are required to have a written assessment policy for its local programs. The assessment policy must identify (1) the tests to be used to measure educational gain for both ABE and ESL students, (2) when pre- and posttests are to be administered, and (3) how tests scores are to be tied to the NRS educational functioning levels for initial placement and for reporting student advancement across levels. The assessments allowed by the State must conform to standard psychometric criteria for validity and reliability and must meet the standards provided by DAEL.

For the educational functioning levels to be meaningful, assessments need to be administered in a standardized and consistent way by all programs in each State. When these procedures are not followed correctly or consistently, the determination of educational functioning level is invalid and not comparable across programs or possibly even within programs, making the data validity questionable.

Idaho Information Regarding the NRS

AEFLA funded adult basic education program are to be monitored to ensure compliance with the National Reporting Standards. In Idaho this is done in two ways; 1) the Quarterly Desk Audit

Report, which ensures that local programs are administering file checks and reviewing program data for the purpose of TA and improved performance outcomes. The desk audit also encourages programs to monitor the accuracy of data input, data integrity, and ensure that processes are followed according to NRS and State Policy., and 2) an on-site visit to each AEFLA funded program to observe administration of assessments, goal setting/advisement/and orientation processes, and to document that the programs are in compliance with NRS and state policy.

The Idaho Assessment Policy has been revised, expanded and approved by OVAE so it is important that we ensure that staff understand and adhere to the policy in FY 2011. This includes the monitoring of assessment administration. The intake and assessment process is extremely important to program improvement and student retention.

NRS On-Site Program Review Guidance

- AEFLA funded programs will be reviewed in an on-site monitoring review process yearly or bi-yearly and particularly in cases where data desk audit reports (or other state required reports) suggest the need for TA or reveal an NRS or State Policy compliance issue.
- The monitoring will take place on site. The monitoring instrument for the NRS review is posted online for your convenience at www.pte.idaho.gov
- The monitoring length and any necessary follow-up reviews will be determined by need, but the routine monitoring visit should conclude within 1-1 ½ days.
- The State ABE Director will conduct the review with the assistance of one or more peer reviewers unless funding becomes available to bring in an outside reviewer or until the State is able to hire a well qualified Professional Development Coordinator to assist in the review.
- The on-site review date will be determined in coordination with the regional program under review.

Prior to the Review

Programs will schedule a phone visit with the State Director no later than one month prior to the review to discuss review items, agenda, questions, concerns, etc.

During the Review

- The review team will observe the intake/orientation process at each site, focusing on the events that take place prior to a student's enrollment. This review will cover orientation, assessment and goal setting, advisement, intake form, entering and reporting data, procedures for counting students, etc.
- Observe a session or a portion of an intake session and orientation session including orientation and testing.
- Conduct a random student file review to ensure that intake forms (paper) match electronic data entered into IMAS as noted in the program's submitted data desk audit reports.
- Document other processes to ensure the integrity of data collection and reporting.

- It will be the program's responsibility to ensure that the above components are available for observation and review when scheduling their site review with the state director.
- The monitoring instrument found on the PTE website at www.pte.idaho.gov will be used to document and monitor processes and policy compliance.

After the Review

At the conclusion of the review, each program manager will be sent a brief description of the findings:

1. Commendations

No action required. Commendations will be included in the review report to include areas of improvement, best practices, innovative strategies, etc.

2. Compliance

Action required within 30 days of notification. If the State finds any compliance issues during the review a corrective action will be required. The program will be notified in writing after the review has concluded. The program must address these findings in a Corrective Action Plan which will be submitted to the State within 30 days of receiving notification. A template for corrective action is posted on the PTE website at www.pte.idaho.gov and the state office must approve the submitted plan and send notification to the program within 3 weeks of receipt of the plan, or revisions will be required in order to reconsider the approval of the plan. Once timelines stated in the plan are met and approved by the State ABE Director the Corrective Action will be closed and the program notified.

3. Recommendations

No immediate action required but follow-up is required. Recommendations are a work in progress. Updates regarding progress on recommended items will be included in the region's annual report. The program will also identify technical assistance needs that would be useful in fulfilling their improvement plans.

Technical assistance will be made available and required of all AEFLA funded programs under corrective action and made available to programs under recommendation in areas where assistance would be valuable.